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Title : Need for construction of Four-Lane Road-cum-Rail Bridge at Saraighat over River Brahmaputra in Assam.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (LAKHIMPUR): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the City of Guwahati being the gateway of North-East India, deserves highest priority in the matter of communication infrastructure to link not only the States of the North-East region but also as the link to South-East Asian countries. A proposal for a three-lane road bridge at Saraighat over Brahmaputra is in the process of finalisation as a component of the four-lane East-West Corridor under the National Highways Development Project. The existing two-lane rail-cum-road bridge at Saraighat constructed in 1960-61 is not only outdated in the present context but also is unable to even accommodate the double-line broad gauge track causing a permanent problem of railway traffic congestion. It is otherwise illogical to construct a three-lane bridge to connect a four-lane highway of national connectivity by jeopardising the future growth of connectivity to this landlocked area.

I, therefore, urge upon the Prime Minister to review the proposal and get it modified for a four-lane road-cum-rail bridge, which will be able to accommodate the national and international rail and road traffic for the next 100 years. Shortsighted policy like the present proposal will harm the future growth of the region in total compromise with the security of India being a very strategic and sensitive zone of the country. If this matter is not taken care of now with utmost sincerity, the loss thereby will be irreparable.